

**Leading Affordable Housing Experts in the Washington Metropolitan Region Gather to Tackle Gentrification and Make the Case for Housing as an Economic Imperative**

**at HAND’s 2017 Annual Meeting & Housing Expo**

*The Region’s Largest Convener of Affordable Housing and Community Development Professionals Brings Together Its Diverse Members Representing Businesses,*

*Government Agencies, Nonprofits, and Financiers in Washington, D.C.*

**Washington, D.C. – June 23, 2017** – [The Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers](https://www.handhousing.org/) (HAND), the largest convener of affordable housing and community development professionals in the Washington metropolitan region, held its 26th Annual Meeting & Housing Expo at the Omni Shoreham Hotel & Conference Center in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, June 20, 2017, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. More than 1,400 attendees and over 100 exhibitors participated in [HAND’s 2017 Annual Meeting & Housing Expo](https://www.handhousing.org/annual-meeting/2017-annual-meeting-housing-expo/) that focused on gentrification in the Greater Washington area, and affordable housing as an economic imperative for the region.

HAND is also the largest professional association of affordable housing industry professionals in the Greater Washington area, offering a mix of training, capacity building and cultivation events for emerging and seasoned professionals alike. HAND’s membership represents the spectrum of industry professionals in the field and includes businesses, real estate developers, nonprofits, financiers, policy makers, resident services providers, government agencies, and more.

“Housing affordability is critical to the Washington region,” said HAND’s Executive Director, Heather Raspberry. “A place for people to call home that’s affordable and accessible to real opportunity is imperative for our region’s economy and the inspiration behind HAND’s efforts to support and engage affordable housing and community development professionals in our area. Affordable housing drives our economic growth and sustainability – from Baltimore, to the Washington area, to the Hampton Roads region, where HAND members operate and thrive.”

HAND’s sold-out Annual Meeting kicked off with a Plenary of leading experts who discussed the benefits and drawbacks of gentrification. Co-presented by the Housing Leaders Group of Greater Washington and HAND, which is a member of the HLG, “Gentrification in Washington and the Surrounding Region: Causes, Consequences, and Equitable Growth Strategies” opened with a detailed primer on gentrification that led into two panels. Renee Nash, director of news & public affairs at WHUR-FM, moderated the first panel, and Dr. Lisa Sturtevant, president of Lisa Sturtevant & Associates, moderated the second and final panel of the Plenary.

A special Fireside Chat, offering a compendium of “Lessons from the Past, Visions for the Future: Housing and Community Development at the Crossroads,” headlined the second half of HAND’s Annual Meeting. David Bowers, vice president & Mid-Atlantic market leader with Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., moderated the candid conversation between nonprofit and private real estate developers, and advocacy organization leaders.

Each year at the Annual Meeting, HAND presents a number of industry awards to organizations and projects that best demonstrate innovation and impact in affordable housing within the Washington metropolitan area. All HAND members are invited to participate. Below are the winners of HAND’s 2017 Housing Achievement Awards, and Children’s Art Contest:

* **Nonprofit Developer of the Year:** Wesley Housing Development Corporation
* **Best Large Affordable Housing Project:** Sheridan Station, WC Smith
* **Best Small Affordable Housing Project:** Girard Street Senior Apartments, The Menkiti Group & Dantes Partners
* **Best Housing Partner:** Prince George’s County Kentland/Palmer Park Transforming

Neighborhoods Initiative

* **Emerging Leader:** Kia Weatherspoon, President, Determined by Design
* **Art Contest Winners:** Fatmata Marah and Tiwalade Taylor, Humphrey Management

“HAND occupies a unique space in our field because of its ability to attract, support and propel such a large, diverse collection of organizations and industries that elevate affordable housing and community development in our area,” said Maryann Dillion, executive director of Housing Initiative Partnership, who is also president of HAND and chair of its Board of Directors. “HAND champions its members and uses its reach to power the success of professionals it represents.”

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**About the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND)**

For 25 years, HAND has served as the only multi-state regional membership association dedicated to supporting the community development industry in its efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Through education, engagement and training, HAND builds the capacity of its diverse membership comprised of nonprofit and for-profit housing developers, resident services providers, lenders, government agencies, policy analysts and others, to support the development of sustainable communities for people and families at all income levels. To learn more, visit [www.HANDHousing.org](http://www.HANDHousing.org).

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